United Nations S/PV.3670

Security Council

Fifty-first Year

Provisional

3670th Meeting

Thursday, 30 May 1996, 12 noon

New York

President:	Mr. Qin Huasun	(China)
Members:	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	Chile	Mr. Larraín
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Germany	Mr. Henze
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Queta
	Honduras	Mr. Rendón Barnica
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Wlosowicz
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Plumbly
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1046 (1996) (S/1996/373 and Add.1)

96-85738 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 12 noon.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1046 (1996) (S/1996/373 and Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Maleski (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1046 (1996), documents S/1996/373 and Add.1.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1996/392, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Poland has joined as a sponsor of the draft resolution.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1996/389, which contains the text of a letter dated 11 April 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of a letter dated 8 April 1996 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker is the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on whom I now call.

Mr. Maleski (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Since my delegation is participating for the first time in the deliberations of the Security Council under your presidency, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your election.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia deeply appreciates the presence of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), the first successful preventive peace-keeping operation of the United Nations. My Government is of the opinion that the situation in the region has not changed to the extent that the mandate of the mission should be restructured or terminated. The Dayton Agreement has not been implemented; the period of its full implementation is still ahead of us. The threats to the Republic of Macedonia by the potential explosion of the crisis have not been overcome yet, in view of the issue of Kosovo in our immediate neighbourhood. The northern border of the Republic of Macedonia has still not been mutually demarcated. The Republic of Macedonia has been left with a significantly reduced defensive capability as a consequence of the withdrawal of all armaments and military equipment following the departure of the former Yugoslav army and as a consequence of the Security Council resolution imposing an arms embargo.

I have listed some of the reasons why the mandate of UNPREDEP should be further extended. I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the members of the Security Council and to the troop-contributing countries that, together with the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, have preserved peace and stability in a volatile region. By strongly supporting the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Macedonia, the United Nations has successfully demonstrated its preventive capability in our common efforts towards world peace.

The President (*interpretation from Chinese*): I thank the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union, of which my country currently occupies the presidency. The following countries associated with the European Union have decided to join in this statement: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and Slovakia. Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway also associate themselves with this statement.

Since the Secretary-General's report of 9 December 1992, we have assured our full support for the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We fully agree with the assessments contained in the Secretary-General's recent report (S/1996/373), of 23 May 1996, according to which the operation has provided a decisive contribution to the stabilization of the political situation in that country, sheltering it from the dangers of a spillover of the Bosnian conflict and thus helping to ease ethnic tensions within its territory by facilitating the dialogue between its cultural components. Therefore, this represents an important precedent in the preventive deployment of United Nations forces and a success story whose results must not be wasted or jeopardized.

If the Secretary-General's report reflects an unquestionable improvement in the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, it is equally clear that this situation still contains troublesome elements of precariousness. In the first place, peace and stability within its borders are still dependent to a large extent on developments in the rest of the former Yugoslavia, and especially on developments in the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the second place, internal ethnic tensions continue to persist. Thirdly, the economic situation is still fragile and precarious.

In our view, these circumstances would make any withdrawal of UNPREDEP forces at this delicate stage premature and potentially dangerous and would risk sending the wrong signal. This is why we welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation and we support today's draft resolution, which extends the mandate of UNPREDEP, in its present configuration, for another six months, to 30 November 1996.

We note the Secretary-General's assessment that a replacement of the Force with United Nations military observers would create severe disadvantages and only modest savings. And we welcome his intention to review questions relating to the concept and strength of UNPREDEP and to inform the Security Council accordingly. Today's draft resolution requests that he do so and that he report to the Council no later than 30 September 1996 for its consideration, which would allow the Council to assess the situation after the Bosnian elections.

Among the positive developments indicated by the Secretary-General is the signing of the Agreement between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 8 April 1996. Today's draft resolution welcomes this Agreement and urges both parties to implement it in full, including the demarcation of their mutual border, which is of special importance.

We also welcome the progress achieved in improving relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece on the basis of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995. We express our full support for the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance, and we hope that the discussions held under his auspices in the context of article 5 of the above-mentioned Accord will lead to a positive result.

The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should not be considered in isolation, but only in the broader context of developments in the former Yugoslavia. Given the precariousness of the progress we have had so far, we consider a continuation of UNPREDEP in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to be of crucial importance, not only for the stability and security of that country, but also for the contribution that it could make to restoring a lasting peace to a region that in recent years has been torn by a long and painful conflict.

The President *(interpretation from Chinese)*: It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Henze (Germany): Let me begin my remarks by stating the obvious: we fully associate ourselves with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the European Union.

When my delegation took the initiative on the draft resolution now before the Council, we did so for a number of reasons.

Since its first days, we have consistently supported the United Nations peace-keeping mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We were and we are convinced that its presence there is a most valuable contribution to peace and stability in the region and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia itself, a country under the prudent leadership of President Gligorov, with which we have very solid and friendly relations.

We also believe that the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), along with its predecessor mission, is one of the success stories of the United Nations. So when we began to put together the first elements for a new draft resolution on UNPREDEP, it was our wish to contribute, as a member of the Security Council, to the continuation of this peace-keeping operation, which is not big in size and costs, but big in terms of usefulness, success and achievement.

Today the Council will decide on the question of a further extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP. Let me sum up our own view with the following brief remarks.

First, we have been told by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that it believes it to be in the best interest of the Macedonian people for the presence of UNPREDEP to be continued without substantial changes, and this information has been confirmed today by the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In addition, also all the troop-contributing countries — and we pay tribute to them and the members of the Force — have made it known that it is their considered common view that the mandate of UNPREDEP should be reaffirmed for another regular extension of six months. We believe that the considered common opinion of the host country and of the troop-contributing countries is in itself a very important element because, obviously, it is in their own interest to continuously assess the security situation in the area in the most careful manner.

Secondly, in his report of 23 May 1996, the Secretary-General has laid out with remarkable care and clarity the arguments both for and against a possible extension of UNPREDEP's current composition and mandate. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his thorough report. Especially because of the balance of its approach and the comprehensiveness of its careful analysis, the report of the Secretary-General, in our view, makes a compelling case. Without going again into all the arguments, let me simply state that we find that the Secretary-General eventually comes to the convincing conclusion that the mandate of UNPREDEP in its present configuration should be extended for a further period of six months, to 30 November 1996. We fully support this analysis and this recommendation.

It has been argued that the situation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has improved to such an extent that a drastic down-sizing of UNPREDEP, or at least a much shorter mandate, should be decided upon. Yes, the situation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has improved. We note, for example, the Agreement of 8 April with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the improved relations with our European Union partner, Greece.

But with regard to the overall situation in the former Yugoslavia, we believe it would be unwise to be too confident too soon, that reliable, lasting stability has already been established in the area. This is, in our view, the strongest reason to continue UNPREDEP for at least another six months.

But are we opposed in principle to changing the configuration of UNPREDEP or reducing its size? Of course not. The draft resolution before us explicitly points to the possibility of changing the composition of UNPREDEP at a later stage in the light of further changes for the better in and around the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as indicated by the Secretary-General.

And I should even like to go one step further. Yesterday, in the informal consultations of the Security Council, our President, the Permanent Representative of China, wisely reminded us of an important principle. With your permission, Mr. President, I should like to quote what you said:

> "Every peace-keeping operation should have not only a beginning but also an end."

We fully subscribe to this principle. Germany will be among the first to welcome a situation in which peace and stability have been secured in the region in such a manner that the UNPREDEP can be sent home with its mission fully accomplished.

But, unfortunately, we have not yet reached this point. With UNPREDEP, peace and security in the area still have to be secured, have to be won firmly. The success of UNPREDEP in the struggle for lasting peace and security is, to our knowledge, disputed by nobody. Therefore, in concluding, let me again mention an old rule that is valid not only in sports: "Never change a winning team".

In the interest of the Macedonian people and the region as a whole, we wish UNPREDEP and its personnel luck and success in the performance of their mandate. It is in this spirit that we will vote for the draft resolution.

Mr. Plumbly (United Kingdom): When this Council decided three and a half years ago to establish a United Nations peace-keeping presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, there were many who expressed doubts as to whether that country's independence could be sustained. Such dire predictions have been proved wrong. The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) is a strikingly successful example of preventive action by the United Nations. Indeed, it has come to be seen as a symbol of the international community's commitment to Macedonian sovereignty and territorial integrity.

On behalf of the British Government, I should like to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of UNPREDEP and its personnel, who have helped create the conditions that made such progress possible. I should also like to pay tribute to President Gligorov and to the wisdom and patient determination with which he has successfully guided his country through the various difficulties and crises of the last few years. It is especially gratifying to a country such as mine, which has been so closely involved in the international community's efforts to restore stability to the Balkan region, that real progress has been made towards solving those difficulties. One particularly welcome recent development was the agreement last month between his country and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the normalization of relations. The British Government urges both countries to work rapidly towards the full implementation of that agreement, and in particular on the demarcation of their mutual border.

The last six months have seen great strides towards the restoration of stability throughout the Balkan region. But this newfound stability remains fragile, and it would be wrong to imagine that the achievements to date cannot be reversed or that they are immune from future developments, principally in Bosnia, as implementation of the peace Agreement enters a critical phase. That is why the United Kingdom believes that now is not the time to withdraw UNPREDEP, or indeed to change significantly the structure of its mission. We have therefore co-sponsored the draft resolution before us, which would extend UNPREDEP's current mandate for a further six months. To extend for a shorter period would, in the United Kingdom's view, be unwise.

But, in particular at this time of financial stringency within the United Nations system, it is right that the Secretary-General should continue to keep all peace-keeping missions, including UNPREDEP, under review. The Secretary-General should, in accordance with the draft resolution before us, undertake a thorough review of UNPREDEP, in our view, in all its aspects by this September. We would be ready to consider any recommendations that he might make to ensure a better use of scarce United Nations resources, so long as such recommendations were compatible with UNPREDEP's ability to carry out its task. It is in any case clear, as the representative of Germany has already suggested, that the time will come when this Council judges that UNPREDEP has fulfilled its mandate, and that its tasks should be taken on by others.

Mr. Larraín (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We wish to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his very precise and comprehensive report covering all aspects of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, submitted pursuant to the provisions of Security Council resolution 1046 (1996).

Likewise, we would highlight and welcome the remarkably positive work that UNPREDEP has been doing since 1992. That preventive deployment force represents a very useful example and model that we should perhaps apply much more frequently in the United Nations, in order to prevent crisis situations from deteriorating and becoming more serious problems, more costly in human and material terms and therefore much more difficult to resolve. UNPREDEP has not limited itself to monitoring the situation on the border zone with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Albania, but, through confidence-building measures, good offices and facilitation of dialogue, it has had, and continues to have, a calming and stabilizing influence throughout the region.

At the same time, we note with great satisfaction and welcome the considerable progress achieved in improving the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's relations with its neighbours. Accordingly, the Interim

Accord signed with Greece last September and the Agreement on the Regulation of Relations and the Promotion of Cooperation with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, signed in April, deserve the highest praise. Similarly, we would express our appreciation for the internal progress pursued by the Government of Skopje, which has resulted in the consolidation of democratic, pluralistic institutions, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his recent report.

Nevertheless, we should not fail to note the elements of internal and regional instability that unfortunately still persist. Inter-ethnic tensions, aggravated by the still precarious economic situation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, still constitute a threat to the social structure of the country as well as to its integration and stability over the longer term. The lack of demarcation of its borders with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, unresolved issues with Greece, and the country's inadequate defence capacity are objective factors that we should not discount.

In addition, beyond the internal aspects I have mentioned, we believe it is necessary to analyse the situation in a broader regional context. The implementation of the Dayton Agreement has thus far brought about significant progress, but we must recognize that perhaps the most sensitive stages of the process lie ahead of us, particularly with respect to concretizing provisions of a political and social nature, and in particular the forthcoming holding of elections in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation therefore fully supports the draft resolution before us and thus the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP, with its present composition, for a period of six months. It would seem to us risky and premature to act otherwise today. If we hasten to bring an early end to the most successful preventive diplomacy operation of the United Nations, it might have consequences that all of us might later regret. This Organization's presence should continue, with its calming and stabilizing effect in the region, especially in the critical months to come. However, in our judgement, that does not mean prolonging this mission indefinitely. Accordingly, we find quite appropriate the request to the Secretary-General in operative paragraph 4 of the draft to review the composition, strength and mandate of the Force before 30 September 1996.

Finally, we wish to express our appreciation and support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sokalski, as well as to the military and civilian personnel of UNPREDEP for the very positive work they are doing.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): At the outset, my delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report of 23 May 1996 pursuant to Security Council resolution 1046 (1996), the latest in a series of progress reports on the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). As a troop contributor to UNPREDEP, Indonesia is pleased to be associated with a unique mission that represents the first United Nations preventive deployment operation of its kind and that has come to reflect the international community's resolve to promote stability in this troubled area.

The Indonesian delegation fully endorses the Secretary-General's recommendation that the mandate of UNPREDEP, in its present configuration, be extended for a further period of six months, to 30 November 1996. This is reflected in the draft resolution now before us. It is also consistent with the request by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP. We share the view that there is a continued need for the presence of UNPREDEP in order to maintain stability, preserve the gains already achieved, help in the process of establishing democratic structures and avoid undermining the still fragile structures of peace in the Balkans.

UNPREDEP is playing an innovative role as the first preventive force deployed by the United Nations. Indeed, it constitutes a continuing success for the United Nations, for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and for the region as a whole. At the national level, we must not underestimate the role of UNPREDEP in facilitating the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's consolidation of its security. My delegation notes the role UNPREDEP is playing in maintaining an active dialogue with all political factions and ethnic groups in order to promote peace and stability. Thus, UNPREDEP has been recognized as a significant instrument in facilitating dialogue, restraint and compromise between the various segments of society. Moreover, it is gratifying to note that the military component of UNPREDEP not only provides a calming and stabilizing effect on the northern and western borders of the country, but also interfaces with a number of civilian agencies and offers various community services and humanitarian assistance to the local population.

At the regional level, the UNPREDEP mission has had a positive impact in preventing the spread of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The relative peace that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has enjoyed is not fortuitous: it is an outcome of diligence and commitment on the part of all the involved parties. Today there is a remarkable transformation in the regional environment within which UNPREDEP operates. The guns and mortars are for the most part silent. We note as evidence of the improving regional situation the signing on 8 April 1996 of the Agreement between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia regulating relations and promoting cooperation between them, as well as the progress that has been achieved in improving relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece on the basis of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995. We also are pleased to see the close cooperation between UNPREDEP and the mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in promoting security in the region.

However, the peace process in the former Yugoslavia remains at a very delicate stage, and its consequences for the stability and security of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia remain uncertain. It would indeed be unwise to be overly confident that stability has been established in the region. Hence, terminating UNPREDEP would be premature. At the same time, the need to review the composition, strength and mandate of UNPREDEP in the light of future developments is one that has been well recognized in the draft resolution. At this juncture, we would like to reiterate that the continued success of the UNPREDEP mission is contingent upon the political will of the parties to do their utmost in refraining from all activities that are detrimental to the peace and stability of the country.

In view of these considerations, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the untiring efforts of Mr. Henryk Sokalski, formerly Chief of Mission and now redesignated as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We should further like to extend our recognition to Brigadier-General Juha Engström, former sector Commander of UNPREDEP, and to welcome the recently appointed Force Commander, Brigadier-General Bo Wranker. We should also like to pay tribute to the men and women of UNPREDEP for their dedication in contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) represents the first preventive force deployed by the United Nations. Therefore, the Republic of Korea attaches particular importance to its work. Its presence has been crucial for the maintenance of peace and security in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as in the whole Balkan region. Its success is bound to have long-term implications for the future of United Nations peace-keeping operations.

Since its deployment in 1992, UNPREDEP has been largely successful. It has effectively discharged its primary task of monitoring, and reporting on the situation along, the borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and with Albania.

UNPREDEP has played a very constructive role in promoting internal political stability by facilitating dialogue and compromise between various segments of society. It has also provided much-needed humanitarian aid to the local population and assisted considerably in national capacity-building.

We wholeheartedly applaud all these outstanding achievements of UNPREDEP. My delegation wishes to express its gratitude to the personnel of UNPREDEP for these laudable contributions. We should also like to pay tribute to the commendable work of other United Nations organizations and international agencies operating in the region, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The situations in the different parts of the former Yugoslavia are inextricably linked. Peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and developments in the rest of the former Yugoslavia, including the effective implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, are mutually dependent and reinforcing. Therefore, in contemplating the future of UNPREDEP, we must consider the Balkans as a whole.

Today, the structures of peace in the former Yugoslavia are flimsy at best. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, although direct hostilities have ceased and

the inter-entity boundary line has been established, we have a long way to go before realizing a sustainable peace. The return of refugees and displaced persons and their resettlement remain formidable tasks. The holding of free and fair elections is also a daunting issue. The forces of reconciliation and reintegration appear to be overshadowed by the forces of partition. Too few war criminals have been brought before the International Tribunal. Meanwhile, in Eastern Slavonia, the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) has just begun the crucial task of demilitarization.

The internal situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and its relations with neighbouring countries are similarly volatile. Despite measurable improvements in its political stability, inter-ethnic tensions remain a source of great concern. Its economy, deeply affected by four devastating years of war in the region, acts as a further destabilizing factor. Its relations with both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Greece, albeit improved of late, still remain delicate, and much work needs to be done. In particular, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has yet to be demarcated.

From this perspective, we concur with the Secretary-General's assessment that it would be too early to conclude that a durable peace has taken hold in the region. After weighing all these factors and taking note of the wishes of the Governments of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and of the troop-contributing countries to have the mandate of UNPREDEP extended, my delegation came to the conclusion that it is premature at this stage to consider either the down-sizing or the withdrawal of UNPREDEP. We will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Finally, given the fluid character of the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and throughout the Balkans, we welcome the intention of the Secretary-General to keep the Council regularly informed of the developments on the ground and look forward to his further recommendations regarding the composition, strength and mandate of UNPREDEP.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: Three and a half years ago, in accordance with the desire of the Macedonian Government, the Security Council decided to send a United Nations military contingent to that country. Thus was the first United Nations preventive peace-keeping operation set in motion. Originally, as a separate mission of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) played an important part in preventing the spread of the Yugoslav crisis and in stabilizing the internal situation in that former Yugoslav Republic, proving by its deeds the vitality of the concept of preventive diplomacy. The United Nations can be justly proud of the success of this operation, and we would like to pay due tribute to the personnel of UNPREDEP, whose members include representatives of the Russian Federation.

At the same time, the current situation in the region of the former Yugoslavia is radically different from the one that prevailed in 1992, or even a year ago. An end has been put to the bloody conflict in Bosnia, where the process of implementing the Peace Agreement is proceeding, and a decisive stage has been reached in the United Nations operation in Eastern Slavonia. An important stabilizing factor was the conclusion on 8 April of this year of the Agreement on the Regulation of Relations and the Promotion of Cooperation between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Progress has also been achieved in improving relations between Skopje and Athens.

Arising from these positive changes is the question of bringing the parameters of the Macedonian operation into line with the new state of affairs. It would be strange, to say the least, if UNPREDEP were now to be maintained in the form in which it existed at the height of the hostilities in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In this connection, we think it is perfectly fitting and proper to raise at this time the question of reconfiguring the whole structure of the operation. We believe this is important both from the point of view of improving the instruments of preventive diplomacy, which should be readily adaptable to changing situations, and from that of the financial crisis in which the United Nations now finds itself, while also taking into account the needs of peace-keeping operations in other areas, including the hottest spots around the world.

We have noted that the report the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council analyses the possibility of replacing the military contingents of UNPREDEP with military observers. Despite certain reservations, the conclusion was reached that this option would be feasible in principle, from both technical and operational viewpoints. The Secretary-General also gave us a very timely reminder that in 1992 — that is, at the peak of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia — the Security Council

had established the personnel strength of the operation's military component at approximately 700. Given that the armed struggle in Bosnia has been brought to a close, we believe that it would be logical to revert at least to this original personnel strength.

In addition, it is clear that several of the functions currently being performed by the civilian component of UNPREDEP could be entrusted to the United Nations Development Programme and the specialized agencies of the Organization.

At the same time, we realize that the positive changes in the region have not yet become irreversible. The Russian Federation is as eager as others to maintain stability in the Balkans. We have not raised the question of winding up the operation or of withdrawing UNPREDEP, and we take particular account of the ongoing concerns of the Macedonian leadership.

In view of all these factors, we believe it would be possible at this stage to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP in its present form for four months, so that the Security Council could subsequently come back to this issue and take a decision that would be consonant with the real state of affairs in the region. Unfortunately, our proposals were not supported by the other members of the Security Council and are not reflected in the draft resolution before us today, which provides for the extension of the mandate for six months in an unaltered form.

We have not heard any convincing arguments in support of the view that this is the only correct decision in the current situation, and we will therefore be obliged to abstain in the voting. We hope that when the mandate of UNPREDEP is taken up again account will be taken of our concerns, which are both financial and politically fundamental, since they relate to the development of United Nations peace-keeping as a whole. On the basis of whether this is done or not, we will determine how this operation should be dealt with in the future.

Mr. Nkgowe (Botswana): The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has played a pivotal role in preventing the spread of the war into the southern region of the Balkans. UNPREDEP has thus been a major success as the first United Nations experiment in preventive diplomacy and it has contributed in no small measure to the stabilization of the international political situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The recent positive political developments in the Balkans have minimized threats to the security of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Under normal circumstances, UNPREDEP would be winding up its mandate in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We are, however, addressing the future of the mandate of a peace-keeping operation in a very volatile region. The peace that has been engendered through the Dayton arrangements has not yet reached the stage of irreversibility. In other words, the security of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is intertwined with stability in the rest of the former Yugoslavia. As the Secretary-General rightly points out in his report, peace and stability within the borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are still very much dependent on developments in the rest of the former Yugoslavia. Thus, the people of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia still have legitimate concerns about threats to the security of their country and would really feel abandoned by the international community if the mandate of UNPREDEP were to be altered at this stage.

The mandate of UNPREDEP should be extended so that it coincides, to the extent possible, with the end of the mandate of the Implementation Force (IFOR), to which it is closely linked. At that stage, it would be much clearer whether or not the peace process in the former Yugoslavia would continue to hold. If the situation were to be stable enough and the peace process appeared irreversible, the people of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia would be more confident about the future, and the mandate of UNPREDEP could then be adjusted and ultimately terminated.

We are the last to advocate the permanent stationing of United Nations forces in any country. Our preference is that a United Nations peace-keeping mission should do its job and depart at the earliest opportunity, but we are not convinced that now is the time to leave in the case of UNPREDEP. We believe UNPREDEP still has a role to play in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and it should therefore remain in that country with the current force strength and composition so that it can continue the good work it has been doing in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

We are not oblivious of the financial crisis with which the United Nations is faced. It is therefore important that every effort should be made to use the scarce resources in the most rational manner. We are confident that the Secretary-General will review the strength and composition of the Force at reasonable

intervals and advise the Council, as appropriate, if and when the situation in the region would warrant the adjustment of the mandate of the mission.

Mr. Queta (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me to thank the Secretary-General for his very complete report on developments regarding the composition, strength and mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

We also wish to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sokalski, as well as to the civilian and military personnel of UNPREDEP for their important preventive work in that area.

We believe, as is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, that it is impossible to foresee with certainty the consequences of a withdrawal of UNPREDEP, given the present situation. That leads us to believe that maintaining the Force, despite its cost, would be more reasonable.

As its name indicates, UNPREDEP is a preventive deployment force that plays a very important role in the region, particularly during the current delicate phase of the implementation of the Dayton Agreement and in the light of regional threats.

It is in that context that Guinea-Bissau supports the report of the Secretary-General, particularly with regard to the extension of the UNPREDEP mandate for a new six-month period and the maintenance of the status quo of that Force, while still hoping that an improvement in the situation in the country and the region may make it possible to eventually reduce the personnel strength of UNPREDEP.

Guinea-Bissau will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council.

Mr. Rendón Barnica (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Since the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) was deployed in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we have seen in that country the growth of confidence and political stability, the consolidation of pluralistic democracy and considerable progress in the improvement of its relations with neighbouring countries.

It is encouraging that last April an Agreement was signed between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which will make it possible to normalize relations and mutual cooperation between the two countries and to hasten the border demarcation process.

We are also pleased with the important progress made towards improving the country's relations with Greece on the basis of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995.

However, although threats to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are currently not as grave as they were in 1992, we believe that the peace and security of the country cannot be totally guaranteed until stability is brought to the region as a whole, the Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully implemented, the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is demarcated, and the controversy with Greece is resolved and inter-ethnic tensions cease.

It is therefore necessary to maintain UNPREDEP with its present military and civilian composition. The delegation of Honduras believes that UNPREDEP continues to play an important role as facilitator in the dialogue between the different sectors in the country in order to promote internal peace and stability. Furthermore, its presence along the northern and western borders of the country has a stabilizing effect throughout the Balkan region.

My delegation believes UNPREDEP is a successful operation and that it is necessary to preserve its achievements. Therefore, we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution extending its mandate.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt): Let me, at the outset, thank the Secretary-General for his report, which contains valuable assessments and important recommendations on the composition, strength and, in general, the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), one of the major successes of United Nations operations in the field of preventive diplomacy.

We agree with the Secretary-General that peace and stability within the borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are still very dependent on developments in the rest of the former Yugoslavia, in particular on the degree of success that can be achieved in implementing the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My Government welcomed the signing on 8 April 1996 of the Agreement on the Regulation of Relations and the Promotion of Cooperation between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and considered that the signing of that Agreement should not be used as an argument to terminate UNPREDEP or to reduce its strength or composition, particularly in the light of the essential role that UNPREDEP could play in assisting the two parties in the demarcation of their mutual borders.

At the same time, we share the assessment of the Secretary-General following an overall evaluation of the military and civilian components of UNPREDEP, that replacing the current infantry units with United Nations military observers would be detrimental to UNPREDEP'S core function of monitoring the border.

My delegation would like to thank the sponsors of the draft resolution, and we consider that the adoption of this draft resolution will help in the maintenance of peace in the former Yugoslavia and on the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland): Let me begin by indicating that we associate ourselves with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the European Union.

The draft resolution before the Security Council today, which, if adopted, will extend the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in its present configuration for a further period of six months, is an important one, and in the light of all the efforts of the United Nations to stabilize the situation in the Balkans, it is also a proper one.

There is not much doubt that the deployment of UNPREDEP in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has greatly contributed to peace and stability in the southern Balkans. The operation has proved that preventive deployment may be an effective form of peace-keeping and that good results can be achieved even with a relatively small number of personnel, when it is carried out at the right time and with a clear mandate.

We are of the opinion that UNPREDEP, in dealing with multiple aspects of the country's internal and external situation, performs its task in a very efficient manner. It is involved in good offices, early warning, fact-finding and monitoring activities, and it certainly facilitates dialogue between various political forces and ethnic groups in the country, thus promoting internal peace and stability.

The Polish delegation fully agrees with the assessments contained in the report of the Secretary-General of 23 May 1996, according to which one of the important roles UNPREDEP plays is in helping the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia establish its statehood and consolidate its security.

Indeed, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, gaining the confidence and respect of other countries, has become a member of such international and regional organizations as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, and thus has found its place in the international community.

The threats to the stability of the country are certainly less dangerous now than they were when the Security Council decided in 1992 to deploy the operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We note positive developments in the situation, such as the major step forward in the process of normalization of relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that has been taken with the signing of the Agreement on the Regulation of Relations and the Promotion of Cooperation between the two countries on 8 April 1996. However, the process needs to be completed as regards, *inter alia*, the demarcation of their States' common border.

It must not be overlooked that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia still faces many difficulties. Processes of economic reform and restructuring are hard to carry out and are painful to the people. Internal political, ethnic and social tensions endure.

Recently, the Security Council has discussed the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of the report of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It is evident that there is still much to be done, especially as far as the implementation of civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreement is concerned. We must bear in mind that this might also influence the fragile stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Taking into consideration all aspects of the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, our delegation considers the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP a step contributing further to peace in the region. The presence of the United Nations Force will

undoubtedly have a reassuring, stabilizing and confidence-building effect.

Let me take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude to the troop-contributing countries participating in the UNPREDEP operation. I also wish to pay a tribute to its personnel for the dedication they show in the performance of their tasks and duties.

The President (*interpretation from Chinese*): I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/392.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Botswana, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Russian Federation

The President (*interpretation from Chinese*): The result of the vote is as follows: 14 votes in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1058 (1996).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): The French delegation was a sponsor of the resolution that has just been adopted. We voted in favour of it because the text reproduced the Secretary-General's sound recommendations.

The extension for six months of the identical mandate and composition of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was indeed justified, both by past experience, in which UNPREDEP played an essential stabilizing role, and by the fears that will persist as long as the peace plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not produced all the beneficial effects we expect of it for peace and stability in the region. Moreover, this was the wish of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Progress has certainly been made since the initial deployment of UNPREDEP. The political, economic and social situations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are more solid. The signing on 8 April 1996 of the Agreement between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia — which was a priority for the States members of the European Union — laid to rest a dangerous state of uncertainty. Nevertheless, much remains to be done. The precise demarcation of the common border between the two countries is a priority.

Finally, concerns remain about a regional situation that is still unstable and could affect the security and territorial integrity of the country. As the Secretary-General's report rightly stresses, it would therefore have been premature to seek to reduce the weight and authority of UNPREDEP. On the other hand, there is no reason why, in six months, when prospects for the future will be clearer, our Council should not draw the appropriate lessons from the success that we hope the mission will achieve.

For the time being, another matter should be of particular importance to all those who truly wish to act in support of UNPREDEP, and of all peace-keeping operations. The arrears in contributions to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), of which UNPREDEP is the last component still in operation, today total $770 million, of which $591 million is owed by a single contributor. This is a considerable burden on those States that are in effect advancing these funds or bearing the consequences of such arrears in their capacity as troop-contributing countries. A solution must urgently be found.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been a success. Its purpose is to prevent the conflict in the region from spreading into and possibly beyond the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. For three and a half years, it has met and passed that test.

My Government is pleased with the role that United States forces have played in the accomplishments of this mission, which is the first purely preventive peace-keeping Force in United Nations history. I was delighted to have the opportunity this past winter to visit the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to meet the officers and troops stationed there. I found a Force that

was uniformly proud of its mission and convinced of the value of its contribution to regional stability and peace. The Force Commander, Bo Wranker of Sweden, his troops and each of the troop-contributing nations have ample grounds for pride in the work that has been done and continues to be done.

The question before the Council today is whether UNPREDEP should continue. Clearly, the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is far different from what it was and far more stable than when UNPREDEP was deployed. The fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina has stopped. We welcome the signing of the Agreement of 8 April between the Governments of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and hope that these Governments will continue working to resolve the outstanding issues between them. We hope soon to see mutual recognition between all the successor States of the former Yugoslavia, and we commend the Governments of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece for the continuing improvement in their bilateral relations.

However, as the Secretary-General points out in his report, it will always be a matter of judgement as to when a preventive operation is no longer required. Certainly, the imminent risk of war has been reduced, but the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia remains fragile. Underlying tensions remain. The presence of UNPREDEP clearly continues to have a reassuring, stabilizing and confidence-building effect not only within the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, but within the region. Accordingly, my Government believes that the continuation of UNPREDEP, at least for the period contemplated by this resolution, provides a measure of insurance that is well worth the costs.

The next six months will be critical in consolidating the gains made in achieving peace in the region. Any change to the mandate or structure of UNPREDEP now would have a potentially destabilizing effect on the peace process in the Balkans. The elections to be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina in mid-September are a critical step forward in the peace process, and it is vital that we avoid as much as possible adding any elements of uncertainty to that process.

It is for these reasons that we concur with our fellow UNPREDEP troop-contributors that the Force should stay at its current strength and continue to perform its mission.

In the last year and a half, the United Nations has reduced its deployed peace-keeping forces by more than 50 per cent. The United States believes strongly that peace-keeping mandates should be examined periodically to determine whether they are still necessary or can be implemented with fewer resources.

UNPREDEP is no exception. UNPREDEP should not continue indefinitely. My Government will certainly consider a reduction or reconfiguration of the Force in the future, if the situation so warrants. We share the hope of the people of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and of all the people of the Balkans that the peace will broaden and deepen in the coming months. We look forward to the day when that peace is so strong that there will no longer be a need for UNPREDEP. That day has not yet arrived, but by continuing UNPREDEP, we contribute to the likelihood that peace will endure and that that day will come. That is a worthy goal for this Council, and for the contributors to this successful and well-run mission.

The President (*interpretation from Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

The Chinese delegation voted in favour of the resolution just adopted by the Council. I would like to point out that ever since its deployment, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) has effectively carried out its tasks and played an important role in checking the spread of conflict in the former Yugoslavia and in stabilizing the situation in that region. We would like to express our appreciation to it.

We have noted that, thanks to the joint efforts made by the international community, the situation in the former Yugoslavia region is moving towards stability. We would like to reiterate that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should be respected by the international community. We have also noted that not long ago the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia signed an agreement on mutual recognition. We feel this serves the basic interests of the two peoples, is beneficial to the development of relations between the two countries and assumes a positive significance in promoting the normalization of relations between the countries in the region and in maintaining the peace and security of the region.

We have studied the report of the Secretary-General, and, taking into account the request of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the situation in the region, expressed our consent to the extension of UNPREDEP's mandate.

At the same time, we feel that the United Nations peace-keeping missions, including preventive deployment missions, should follow some established principles and should be terminated upon completion of their mandates. We hope that, with a continued improvement of the situation in the region, UNPREDEP will reduce its strength according to its actual needs and finally terminate its mission in a smooth manner.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.